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Haig Chance For Cabinet In Jeopardy

Reagan Told Concern About Watergate Role Clouds Appointment

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Questions about former general Alexander M. Haig Jr.'s assistance to Richard M. Nixon in the final stages of the Watergate affair have put his appointment as secretary of state in jeopardy, authoritative sources said yesterday.

Sources close to President-elect Ronald Reagan said that the president-elect and his associates were concerned by the warnings they had received from Sen. Howard H. Baker Jr. (R-Tenn.), the future Senate majority leader, that Haig could run into trouble in the Senate. This has put Haig's nomination in jeopardy, these sources said, though many around Reagan still want him for the job.

Haig's cause is also being hurt by the fact that Nixon himself is campaigning avidly for Haig's nomination to be secretary of state, knowledgeable sources said.

If Reagan decides he cannot select Haig, sources said, he will turn to George P. Shultz, Caspar W. Weinberger or William J. Casey to fill the State Department job. Shultz has told Reagan he does not want the appointment, but sources close to Reagan hope he might reconsider.

Weinberger is in line to become secretary of defense and Casey director of the Central Intelligence Agency in the Reagan administration. These posts might be juggled if Haig is dropped as secretary of state.

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